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**"Priority One: Winning the War on Terrorism"**

by Congressman Allen Boyd

On September 11, 2001, our great nation witnessed a type of terror we have never before seen. In response to the attacks, Congress and the President have been working day and night to develop legislation to respond to and assist those who have been so greatly impacted by these terrorist acts. I believe the most important function of the United States government is ensuring public safety and protecting our national security, and I will review any legislation Congress considers with these two goals in mind. Unfortunately, the Economic Stimulus Packages that Congress considered yesterday did not include these priorities. The contest between stimulus packages, which were either heavy on tax cuts or heavy on inappropriate spending, did nothing to increase our ability to win the war on terrorism or ensure that Americans are safe. These approaches are out of step with the real needs of the American people during this time of crisis.

In particular, the plan to initiate additional tax cuts for big business is drastically out of step with the needs of America in today's reality and therefore, I voted against it. In regards to this plan we must ask ourselves, should we repeal the corporate alternative tax or provide the funding necessary to protect our airports? Should we lower the capital gains tax or should we ensure our mail delivery system is safe? Should we increase expensing for businesses or should we make sure our nation's drinking water supply is safe? The Republican proposal is weighted down with corporate tax relief and does nothing to ensure that we have the resources necessary to win the war on terrorism or to prevent future terrorist attacks in the United States. Further, it does little to protect the economy just a few short years from now.

The American people deserve better. While working with my colleagues in the Blue Dog Coalition, we developed a different approach which sets the priority on winning the war on terrorism and protecting public safety without losing the battle to save the economy. We believe Congress should provide the resources necessary to fight and win the war on terrorism as well as protect the American people from attack, and that all costs of the package should be fully offset over the ten year budget window to avoid a return to long-term budget deficits and an increase in national debt.

Never in the history of this country has the government cut taxes during times of war, and our

history books prove this has been the correct and appropriate approach to take. The United States is at war, a war different from anything we have seen before. Every American citizen is a soldier on the front line of battle. We lost over 6,000 of our soldiers on September 11th, and more since as a result of bio-terrorism. Americans understand the urgency of the dire situation our country faces, and true to our greatest qualities, we see the need for sacrifice. We are the strongest country in the world and now is not the time to engage in fiscally irresponsible policies. We must provide resources to restore the public's confidence in their own safety and in our national security. This will in turn restore confidence in our economy and only then will the economy rebound to where it was before.